

A nation's foreign policy is of critical importance because it determines how that nation interacts with the rest of the planet. American foreign policy should emphasize our role as a force for global peace and stability and as an exemplar of democratic values. This has required a dramatic recalibration of our approach to foreign policy and global leadership – from the previous administration's largely unilateral approach to one in which our government works in collaboration with the rest of the world on challenges that are truly global in nature.

My foreign policy involvements during my years in Congress have ranged from providing direct start-up assistance to the democratic parliaments emerging from Communism in post-Soviet Central and Eastern Europe, to efforts aimed at promoting a just and lasting settlement between Israel and its neighbors (see [Middle East Peace](#)). After opposing the war in Iraq from the beginning, I worked to build support in Congress for an orderly redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq, combined with a robust diplomatic initiative to bring about long-term stability in the Middle East. I support the relentless pursuit of al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, including by finishing our important work in [Afghanistan](#).

I have spearheaded a successful effort to improve transparency and accountability in the use of private military contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan through my legislation to bring such contractors under U.S. law and to set basic standards for contracting.

In addition, I serve as Co-Chair of the [House Democracy Partnership](#), which works to strengthen legislative institutions in developing democracies around the world. Our current partner countries include: Afghanistan, East Timor, Georgia, Haiti, Indonesia, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Peru and Ukraine.

Related Information

- [House Democracy Partnership](#)
- [Supporting Our Troops](#)
- [Afghanistan](#)

{mooblock=Middle East Peace}

A peaceful, democratic Middle East is critical to the national security of the United States, and I have been engaged for much of my career in efforts to progress toward this goal. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, divided and fragile states like Lebanon and Iraq, and the presence of hostile regimes in countries like Iran and Syria each contribute to regional instability and offer opportunities to extremists and terrorists. The sweeping changes of the "Arab Spring" have brought new hope and opportunity to the region, but they have also given rise to a new set of challenges, from economic stagnation to Islamist ascendancy.

A negotiated peace between Israel and her Palestinian and Arab neighbors is in the vital national interest of Israelis, Palestinians, and Americans alike. For too long, the conflict has forced successive generations of Israelis to live in constant fear while denying Palestinians the viable, independent state they deserve. After a period of great progress toward peace in the 1990s, the last decade has seen a return to violence and bloodshed, with small steps forward undermined by broken promises and political failures on all sides. President Obama came to office determined to make Middle East peace a high priority, but thus far his administration's efforts have not persuaded Israelis and Palestinians to return to the negotiating table to resolve the issues that divide them. The window for a two-state solution is closing, and I believe we must [act decisively](#) to bring about a just and sustainable peace before it is too late.

Israel's neighbor to the north, Lebanon, has also struggled with violent challenges to its fragile democracy. Through the [House Democracy Partnership](#), which I co-chair, I have worked to promote peace and reconciliation in that troubled nation. Wracked by civil war for much of the last three decades, there is cause for hope in Lebanon as a unity government has taken power.

With President Obama's leadership, there is some cause for hope in the region. We are finally bringing the war in Iraq, [which I opposed from the beginning](#), to a close, and the Arab Spring has opened a new chapter in U.S. relations with the Middle East. As we respond to this changing environment, I will continue to support U.S. policies that support peace, economic opportunity, and security in this critical region.

Related Information

- [House Democracy Partnership](#)
- President Obama's policy for [A New Beginning](#) with the Muslim world.
- [Remarks on H.R. 4133, the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act](#)

{/mooblock}